

NEWSLETTER #23 - APRIL 2004

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Leland Fly Fishing Travel Newsletter – April, '04

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This is the twenty-third edition of our monthly newsletter with updates on great fly fishing venues and insights for our traveling fly fishers. We want to help you match the right location with your fly fishing goals and objectives and properly prepare you to fully enjoy the experience. We've been to most locations and pride ourselves on our ability to research new sites. Whatever unbiased information on timing and locations we can provide comes at the same cost to you as booking direct – i.e., no extra cost.

WESTERN U.S./CANADIAN FLY FISHING ADVENTURES FOR THIS SUMMER

There is still space available at many of the great destinations in the Western US and Canada for this summer. However, now is the time to make plans and reservations as many of the more popular destinations will be full soon, if not already. For long weekends, there's choices that range from the finest lodge in Northern Calif, the Clearwater House in Northern California, to an overnight float trip through the canyon of the South Fork of the Snake in Eastern Idaho, near Jackson Hole. Eastern Idaho also presents exciting, award winning destinations such as Three Rivers Ranch and Henry's Fork Lodge. In Wyoming, the Platte River is one of the best fisheries in the lower US as is the Missouri River in Montana. For extended float trips, Montana's Smith River and the Blackwater in British Columbia are great experiences with a strong following. Colorado has Elk Creek Lodge, one of the finest upscale properties and fisheries in the US. If it's a wilderness fly out adventure you're looking for, Moose Lake Lodge in BC has an interesting array of waters teeming with native rainbow and cutthroat trout. Also, there's always the dependable, quality operations in Alaska – both float trips and world renowned lodges. Whether you're looking for a three or four day adventure or you have a week or more, there's many great choices throughout the West awaiting you.

BUSH STREET SHOP DAY THIS THURSDAY – FAMILY, CORPORATE, GROUP TRIPS

I'll be in the Bush Street shop this Thursday from 11:00am til 6:00pm (other times by appointment). There are two scheduled presentations at 12:30 and 5:00 on ideas for corporate and family trips. From long weekends to week-long adventures, there are many ways to plan an exciting outdoor experience built around fly fishing for either experts or newcomers just learning the sport. Whether it's an incentive/celebratory event, a board meeting with an interesting dimension, a family gathering or a team building agenda, there are many possibilities. We'll also have a scheduled presentation on Fly Fishing Earth's Pristine Destinations at 4:00pm. Additionally, I'm available for individually scheduled appointments to review any of our world class fly fishing destinations – can have slide presentations with me if requested in advance. Also in the shop on Thursday will be Jamie Lyle who will have the latest products from Sage, Galvan, Tibor, Simms, Action Optics, and Scientific Anglers.

DEFINING "FANTASY," NEW ZEALAND STYLE

A fly fisher is always looking for that special experience that creates the sort of memories that are permanently etched in our memory banks (even fading memory banks). Sometimes that experience has a certain vista or sunset as a backdrop; sometimes it's a special fish or fishes, and sometimes, when we're very lucky, we get "it all" wrapped up in one day. When

those “fantasy days” happen in New Zealand, it leaves memories that can’t be duplicated anywhere else in the world. Usually it consists of giant rainbows and browns taken sight fishing to individual fish in crystal clear waters in spectacular surroundings. Some of those early ’04 experiences reported in the last few weeks include:

Dr. George Singleton enjoyed a “fantasy” day on a helicopter fly-out from Lake Rotoroa Lodge to a river that has been called the “finest brown trout river in the world” by several world traveling anglers. Thirteen browns were released for the day, all between 5.5 and 6.5 pounds. In our last newsletter, I referenced a day I had on this same river, a few days prior to Dr. Singleton’s, with nine browns released with a total wt of 51.5 pounds. Hard to believe there are waters with “cookie cutter” six pound browns!

Jim Taylor, on his second NZ trip, encountered lots of inclement weather but managed to register a day that captures the best of NZ. Fishing a small, gin clear, spring creek beneath glacier capped peaks with our favorite Kiwi guide, Jim took six browns on dry flies, all over seven pounds!!!

Damian Hedley last year took a nine pound rainbow during a fantastic week at Poronui Ranch (he wrote a report on his overall experiences that was in the newsletter a year ago and can be forwarded). This year, he topped that with a giant twelve pound ‘bow!!

LELAND AMAZON TRIP FOR TROPHY PEACOCK BASS

Karl Kirbus, Co-manager of the Bush Street shop, is leading a group of adventurers to the Amazon with the primary target being trophy peacock bass. The trip is scheduled for the “prime time” early in ’05. We have four spots remaining. If you’d like more information, hit reply or contact Karl in the SF shop.

FLY FISHING QUIPS AND QUOTES

“Fly fishing consists of a series of misadventures interspersed by occasional moments of glory.”
Howard Marshall ’67

FALL RIVER (NORTHERN CAL) CABIN AVAILABLE

Leland’s is now representing a privately owned cabin on the Fall River in Northern California. Upstairs it has two beds and a bath; downstairs a cot and sleeper sofa. The kitchen is well equipped, and the refrigerator allows ample storage space for food and wine. Maid service available. A dock with boat and motor is just out the front door. Guide service can come with a rental. If you’d like more details, hit “reply” and let us know.

TRIP REPORTS: BELIZE AND PATAGONIA

How’s this for a “fantasy” salt water flats fly fishing experience: Greg Schurger, Paul Wilms, Bill Mink and Dennis Gieffels were on a Meca trip with Martin McCord in Belize a few weeks ago. Most of the week was spent north of Belize City chasing bonefish, tarpon, snook, etc. For two days, they moved the mothership south to test some of the world’s most productive permit flats. Only one of the group had ever taken a permit prior to this trip. In two days, they released seven permit to 15.5 pounds. Paul took his second and third permit and Dennis got his first. Greg set a Meca record for a “first permit” experience releasing four fish, with three of them taken during the same day!!

Last month, we published some reports from Patagonia trips to our favorite area in the Andes. This month, we have one more very favorable report from Gordon Taylor, a seasoned, globe hopping fly fisherman. Gordon reports this trip “was one

of the best places I've ever been, a truly superior experience. It was a great lodge with fabulous food and lots of good fishing with some fish in the 25+ inch range available. The scenery was magnificent, the waters beautiful, and the owners/hosts were gracious, caring and hard working."

PRIME STEELHEAD SPACE – BABINE RIVER

Normally, the prime time space at the world class steelhead lodges on the Dean and Babine are long gone by this time of year. However, the tough fishing this past year may have shaken out some of the regulars who lock up this limited permitted space each year (for unknown reasons, many of the traditionally strong steelhead runs up and down the BC coast were off in '04). Available as of this writing:

Babine Steelhead Lodge: This lodge has been closely held in the past and not open to outside bookings. This was mentioned in last months newsletter and we have four spots remaining for the week of Oct 9 – 15.

LELAND-FRONTIERS AGENT AGREEMENT

In addition to the many great destinations that we represent, Leland Fly Fishing Adventures also has an agreement with Frontiers to represent all their properties (many of which we already book independently). If you are considering any of the destinations that Frontiers offers, please give us a call as it's virtually the same process as booking through Frontiers, and we need the "bonus points." And, we may have some personal experiences that can add to your knowledge and preparations.

Either phone or drop us an e-mail if you have questions or would like more information about any of our destinations.

An enthusiastic traveling fly fisherman,

Don Muelrath

Leland Fly Fishing Adventures

888-347-4896

flyfish@napanet.net

www.flyfishingoutfitters.com

e-mail Josh Frazier at Josh@flyfishingoutfitters.com

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